



CAMBRIDGE HISTORICAL COMMISSION

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Guidelines for Institutional Preservation Grants (IPG) Historic Resources Community Preservation Fund Cambridge Historical Commission

Introduction

The Cambridge Historical Commission has established an Institutional Preservation Grant initiative that provides funds to qualified non-profit organizations for rehabilitation or restoration of significant Cambridge buildings or structures. This program is funded by the Massachusetts Community Preservation Act (CPA) and offers grants of up to \$50,000 outright and up to an additional \$50,000 on a matching basis.

1. Eligible Applicants

Eligible applicants are private, non-profit organizations that are recognized under 501(c)3 of the Internal Revenue Code and that are the owners or long-term lessees of an eligible historic resource in Cambridge.

- Tenants must have written approval from property owners to participate in program;
- Properties must be in conformance with State and local code requirements, including the City's zoning ordinance and building codes; and
- Applicants must comply with all State and local laws and regulations pertaining to licensing and permits.

2. Eligible Historic Resources

Eligible historic resources can be buildings, structures, or other real property. To be considered for grants under the provisions of the Community Preservation Act, historic resources must be either listed on the State Register of Historic Places or be determined by the Cambridge Historical Commission to be significant in the history, archaeology, architecture or culture of the City of Cambridge.

To determine the eligibility of an historic resource and a proposed project for Institutional Preservation Grant assistance, interested applicants must submit a Letter of Intent that:

- Requests the Historical Commission to ascertain the State Register status of the property, or make a determination as to the historical, archaeological, architectural or cultural significance of the resource,
- Demonstrates that the project is eligible for CPA consideration as defined below, and
- Includes a description of the type and scope of work for the project proposed, with preliminary cost estimates and schematic plans where appropriate.

3. Eligible Projects

According to the CPA statute, CPA assistance may be used for the “acquisition, preservation, rehabilitation and restoration of historic resources,” which include the following:

- Obtaining a historic resource by “gift, purchase, devise, grant, rental, rental purchase, lease or otherwise,” but not including “a taking by eminent domain;”
- Preserving by protecting “personal or real property from injury, harm or destruction, but not including maintenance;” or
- Rehabilitating the historic resource, which is defined as “the remodeling, reconstruction and making of extraordinary repairs to historic resources ... for the purposes of making such historic resources ... functional for their intended use.” Rehabilitation may include work done to comply with the Americans with Disabilities Act and other federal, state or local building or access codes. “With respect to historic resources, rehabilitation shall ... comply with the Standards for Rehabilitation stated in the United States Secretary of the Interior’s Standards for the Treatment of Historic Properties.”

Maintenance (defined as the “upkeep of real or personal property”) is not an eligible grant expense. For example, painting and routine repairs in preparation for painting are considered maintenance and are not an eligible expenditure. Cambridge’s Institutional Preservation Grants can only be used for exterior restoration, or structural work necessary to ensure the continued integrity of the building or structure; however, in some instances a project will not be considered complete until the work has been painted. Interior restoration work will not be supported.

Alterations and improvements made prior to executing a contract are not eligible for reimbursement unless specifically provided for.

4. Historical Commission Review of Projects Proposed for CPA Consideration

The Cambridge Historical Commission will use the following criteria to review letters of intent for eligible projects proposed for Institutional Preservation Grant assistance:

- Level of historical, archaeological, architectural or cultural significance of the property;
- Appropriateness of the proposed acquisition, preservation, rehabilitation, or restoration for the property;
- Anticipated public benefit to users and community residents;
- Potential for loss or destruction of the property without a grant;
- Demonstrated financial need; and
- Administrative and financial management capabilities of the applicant.

The Commission will review the letters of intent at a public meeting. Applicants with projects that are determined eligible for IPG assistance will be asked to submit detailed proposals, including plans and specifications for the work. Certain projects may require the services of an architect or engineer, but these expenditures are not eligible for reimbursement. Grant awards will be based on an evaluation of the project in light of the criteria above and on the quality and completeness of the submission.

5. CHC Review and Monitoring of Final Construction Plans and Specifications

The Executive Director of the Cambridge Historical Commission or his designee must review and approve final construction plans and specifications before the applicant begins work or applies for a building permit. The Commission’s review is intended to ensure that

the project complies with the Guidelines for Rehabilitation stated in the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for the Treatment of Historic Properties (<http://www.cr.nps.gov/hps/tps/tax/rhb/guide.htm>). These guidelines are summarized below, but applicants and their contractors are urged to review the full text.

6. Preservation Restriction

As a condition of receiving an Institutional Preservation Grant for a property not already protected by a preservation restriction, designated as a landmark, or located in an historic district or neighborhood conservation district, the owner may be required to enter into a preservation restriction under M.G.L. Ch. 184 that will protect it for a term of thirty years. Alternatively, applicants (and owners, if different) may be required to maintain improvements funded by a grant for a specified term of years.

Section 12 of the Community Preservation Act requires that “a real property interest that is purchased with monies from the Community Preservation Fund shall be bound by a permanent deed restriction that meets the requirements of chapter 184, limiting the use of the interest to the purpose for which it was acquired.”

Preservation restrictions acquired by the Cambridge Historical Commission will require the issuance of a Certificate of Appropriateness, Nonapplicability or Hardship for any alteration, construction or demolition of the publicly visible exterior architectural features of the restricted property, as if it is located in an historic district established under M.G.L. Ch. 40C.

7. Allowable Costs for Institutional Preservation Grant Projects

Customarily, Preservation Grant funds have been used to leverage the efforts of individuals and agencies by supporting the incremental cost of historic preservation activities, and have not funded the entire cost of the project. For example, the Commission has helped defray the cost differential between asphalt shingles and slate roofing, between installing plain posts and reproducing appropriate porch columns, or between vinyl siding and wood clapboards and trim. Institutional Preservation Grant projects will operate on the same principle, as follows:

Development Projects: Requests may be submitted for construction activities including stabilization, protection, rehabilitation, and restoration. Grant funding can be used to cover the costs of material and labor necessary to ensure the preservation, safety, and accessibility of historic cultural resources. Development of universal access is allowable as part of a larger project.

- Allowable costs: Overall building preservation or restoration, building code compliance, and barrier-free access where historic fabric is directly involved. Activities that secure or maintain a weatherproof shell will be given priority.
- Non-allowable costs: Projects consisting of routine maintenance (including painting), upgrading of mechanical systems (i.e., heating, ventilation, air conditioning, electrical, or plumbing work, unless the present systems present an imminent danger to the structure), renovation of non-historic spaces, or construction of additions will not be considered. Institutional Preservation Grant funds may not be used to support restoration or repair of interior spaces used for worship. Architectural/engineering fees are not eligible for funding.

Acquisition Projects: Requests may be submitted to acquire properties listed on the State Register of Historic Places that are imminently threatened with inappropriate alteration or destruction.

8. Grant Amounts

The maximum Institutional Preservation Grant for any single project will be the same as that allowed to affordable housing agencies under the Commission's Preservation Grant program: an outright grant of up to \$50,000, with an allowance for a further grant of up to 50% of additional documented costs for a maximum disbursement of \$100,000. Under this policy, the Commission may reimburse grantees for 100% of pre-approved eligible costs up to the amount of the flat grant, and for 50% of eligible costs up to the maximum allowed disbursement.

Actual grant amounts will be determined by the Commission on the basis of the selection criteria and with regard to the availability of funds. The actual grant amount offered may be less than the total cost of the work, even for projects costing less than \$50,000.

Grants will be made on a reimbursement basis and will not be paid until the approved work is completed to the satisfaction of the Commission.

9. Termination

The City of Cambridge retains the right to terminate any agreement under the Institutional Preservation Grant Program if a participant is found to be in violation of any conditions set forth in these guidelines or if the project has been started prior to an executed agreement with the City of Cambridge.

10. Application and Information

If you wish to participate in the program and would like to set up a meeting with the CHC staff, or if you would like additional information, please contact Kit Rawlins, (617) 349-4684, or by e-mail at krawlins@cambridgema.gov.

The City of Cambridge IPG Program does not discriminate on the basis of disability. The program will provide auxiliary aids and services, written materials in alternative formats, and reasonable modifications in policies and procedures to persons with disabilities upon request.

Cambridge Historical Commission
January 2, 2007

The Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation

The CHC will review IPG applications for compliance with the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation, which are summarized below. For further information, consult <http://www.cr.nps.gov/hps/tps/tax/rhb/guide.htm>.

1. Every reasonable effort shall be made to provide a compatible use for property that requires minimal alteration of the building, structure, or site and its environment, or to use a property for its originally intended purpose.
2. The distinguishing original qualities or character of a building, structure, or site and its environment shall not be destroyed. The removal or alteration of any historic material or distinctive architectural features should be avoided when possible.
3. All buildings, structures, and sites shall be recognized as products of their own time. Alterations that have no historical basis and which seek to create an earlier appearance shall be discouraged.
4. Changes that may have taken place in the course of time are evidence of the history and development of a building, structure or site and its environment. These changes may have acquired significance in their own right, and this significance shall be recognized and respected.
5. Distinctive stylistic features or examples of skilled craftsmanship that characterized a building, structure, or site shall be treated with sensitivity.
6. Deteriorated architectural features shall be repaired rather than replaced, wherever possible. In the event replacement is necessary, the new material should match the material being replaced in composition, design, color, texture, and other visual qualities. Repair or replacement of missing architectural features should be based on accurate duplications of features, substantiated by historic, physical, or pictorial evidence rather than on conjectural design of the availability of different architectural elements from other building or structures.
7. The surface cleaning of structures shall be undertaken with the gentlest means possible. Sandblasting and other cleaning methods that will damage the historic building materials shall not be undertaken.
8. Every reasonable effort shall be made to protect and preserve archeological resources affected by, or adjacent to, the project.
9. Contemporary design for alterations and additions to existing properties shall not be discouraged when such alterations and additions do not destroy significant historical, architectural or cultural material, and such design is compatible with the size, scale, color, material, and character of the property, neighborhood or environment.
10. Wherever possible, new additions or alterations to structures shall be done in such a manner that if such additions or alterations were to be removed in the future, the essential form and integrity of the structure would be unimpaired.

Cambridge Historical Commission
May 18, 2005